8

GREENES GROATSWORTH OF WIT, BOUGHT WITH A Million of Repentance.

Describing the folly of Youth, the falshood of make-shift Flatterers, the Misery of the Negligent, and Mischieves of deceiving Curtezans.

Published at his dying request,
AND
Newly corrected and of many errors purged.

Felicem fuisse infaustum.



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TO WITTIE POETS
Or Poeticall Wits.

A *Wit* that runnes in this ſublunarie *Maze*, and takes but *Nature* for its *Originall*, makes *Reaſon* and *Judgement* a payre of falſe ſpectacles, wherethrough to take an imperfect ſurvey of things *above earth*, and ſo leaping over the light of *divine direction*, falls hudwinck't into the pitfall of its own Folly: For a *Wit* unſanctified, is the *Divel's Awvile*, whereon he forges the Engines of *ſelfe-ruine*. This is the reaſon that ſo many *wit-worne Ideots*, after they have diſcended from the high ſtand of *Contemplation* to looke into themſelves, are forced (the day after the Fayre) to howle out this old *Ballad* made in Hell,

Ingenio perij, qui miſer ipſe meo:
Wit whither wilt thou? woe is me;
Th'haſt brought me to this miſery.

Under the wings of a *Wit-naturall*, are hatcht theſe 3 unlucky birds: *Impudence, Selfe-conceit, Emulation. Impudence* turnes the Key of *Contempt*, and lets in *hard Opinion* to paſſe in *Judgement* againſt the *Generall*, ſtill bearing our her owne *Diſeaſe* with a ſtolne face: her *forme* is reflected

from the glasse of *Flattery*, wherein she shewes fayre, others foule; and dashing on *Pigges* falsely presented, scornefully kicks downe perfect *Knowledge* to the lowest Region of disgrace.

Selfe-conceit, she prodigiously studies to put out the *Light of wit*, by seeming to know beyond the reach of *Reason*, as if she had miraculously discovered some stand from off the earth, above the sight of *Humanitie*, from whence over-looking all, makes it her own *glorie*, hypercritically to reprove others.

Emulation, was nurs'd by a Shee-Toad; shee never sins swelling, till she burst her selfe, and poysons others: she speakes none faire, but a Barber, and him for feare too, lest he should shew her the tricke of a Cut-throat: She will be seen, where she may not be *knowne*: Shee's ever struggling to clamber up to the narrow top of absolute *perfection*, and there to sit alone, whilst the deserfull *Hopes* of true *Discretion* willingly give up their *Cares*, & silently consent to stay *below*, or come *behind*. These prenominated, are the three bold Bayards, that justle and shoulder for a sitting place in this Worlds wide *Court of Requests*, when *Vertue* and *Knowledge* know it better manners to stand and wait.

The bestiall gutlings of this fulsom-feeding age, fall upon a peece of piping-hot *poetrie*, as on a *Christmas pie*, they dabble their durty fingers in't, stuffe up their stomacks; belch out a sowre *Censure*, and then regardlesly thrust it to the lower end o'th table: so that, notwithstanding she come clad in the richest habit of *Skill*, and prankt out in the liveliest colours of *Conceit*, yet before *Censures* blinking eye, she appeares but an ill-favoured Dowdie.

Poetrie affoords better measure of *Charitie*, than *Poperie*: For, to lend the world a furnish of *Wit*, shee layes her *owne* to pawne; And for her *Humilitie*, that's ouer-running full: for shee will kisse the shadow of a gowtie-toes shadow, and lie crowching at the foot of an *Epistle*, to watch the fall of some *Great-mans* gracefull *looke*; and at last, for her labour, perhaps, be popt in'h mouth with a *Charles Almes*, that's *Nothing*. *Poetrie* and *Beggerie* are *twin-borne brats*: they have one *fate* from *Birth* one *fall* to *Death*, and both *unfortunate*.

Of all other *creatures* your *Poet* lives most in, and most out of danger; and that in two respects: He lives most in danger, to perish for want of *Competencie*, and contrariwise, he lives most out of danger, for ever being rifled; because he never carries any thing about him, worth playing the theefe for: To be a *Poet*, and have *meanes* to *bee so*, is not *to be* at all: for hee must put off *himselfe*: and compose his *parts* after the *vulgar forme*; be *new*, with mens *new affections*: hee must not run a counter-course, out from the sent of those *Humors*, the present times approve: Above all he must deifie *pride*; she must have tapers of *supple soothings*, set up before her illustrious *outside*; no matter, if the *Soule* within, sit poorely without *Light*. The true *Degree*, and just *Height* of her swolne *Sublimitie*, must not bee taken right *as it is*, but as it *seemes to be*: after this, *Imagination* steps out, and (as *Isis* Asse was) guls her with this beleefe; That those *Honors* are bestowed on her, when indeed they are otherwise offered up to the *painted Idoll* she carries.

O Spirit of Distraction! That sacred *Learning*, the happie *Birth* of Heaven; who has *Reward* and *Riches* dwelling within her selfe; should be forc't by the furious Tyrant

rant *want*, ſo to proſtrate her unblemiſh't *Bodie*, as to commit folly with *Earth*, and beſoile her State of *Cleerneſſe*, for ſo groſſe a benefit as Breath?

Wit may not unaptly be termed, the worlds *goggle-eyde Lampe*; which illightning all, darkens its owne: and to feed others, devours it ſelfe: *Wit* and *Honeſty* cannot abide each others Company; for *Neceſſitie* is the *go-betweene*, to ſet'em at odds. *Wit* is a ſkilfull midwife, it can deliver its *owner* of a bigge-bellied Purſe, and bring the ſame man to bed of a foule ſhirt. There's an Engliſh Proverbe, that *Wit runs a wooll-gathering*: and good reaſon two: for its commonly *thred-bare*. A *Poet* & his *wit*, muſt be like *Adams* & his *Ape*; they muſt trudge together from place to place, to ſhew tricks for a living: and that too, (like a Witches) ever bare and baſe: Is not that *Wit* ſuperlatively ſottiſh? which diſburſes large ſums of *Labor*; and takes upon truſt ineſtimable treaſures of *Time*, for Doomes-day repayment, only to purchaſe a *puffe of praiſe*: and yet at laſt, leavs to his Heyre nothing, but the *Fee-ſimple of povertie*? That *Life* therefore is but *Death* abov ground, which propounds *Griefe* it's *Gaine*; and affliction it's end and period.

But here I meete with an *Exit*: the *prologue*'s ended, and I muſt off: Now *Reader* (for I will not call thee *gentle*, till I know whether thou wilt bite or no) behold a drie and *withered ſhadow*, which once was *Greene*, appeare in his native colour: new dipt, and a freſh gloſſe ſet on him: ready to enter upon the Stage of triall, to anſwer upon's Cu, and ſpeake his owne part.

Yours; if not, the cares taken.

L.H.

GREENE'S

Groatſ-worth of WIT.

IN an Iland bound with the Ocean, there was ſometime a City ſituated, made rich by Merchandize, and populous by long ſpace; the name is not mentioned in the Antiquary, or elſe worne out by times Antiquity, what it was it greatly skils not, but therein thus it happened. An old new made Gentleman herein dwelt of no ſmall credit, exceeding wealthy, and of a large Conſcience, he had gathered from many to beſtow upon one, for though he had two ſonnes, hee eſteemed but one, that being, as hime ſelfe, brought up to be Gold's bondman, was therfore held Heire apparent of his ill-gathered goods.

The other was a Scholler, and married to a proper Gentlewoman, and therfore leaſt regarded: for it is an old ſaying, To learning and Law there is no greater foe, than they that nothing know; yet was not the Father altogether unlettered, for he had good experience in a Moverior, and by the univerſall termes therein contained, had driven many Gentlemen to ſeeke unknown countries: wife, hee was, for hee bare office in his Parish, and ſate as formally in his forſcore Cloſure, as if he had beene a very upright dealing Burges, he-

was religious too, never without a booke at his belt, and a bolt in his mouth, ready to shoote through his sinfull neighbors.

And Latine hee had somewhere learned, which though it were but little, yet was it profitable, for hee had this philosophy written in a Ring *Tu tibi cura*, which precept he curiously observed, being in selfe-love so religious, as he held it no point of Charity to part with any thing, of which hee living might make use.

But as all mortall things are momentary, and no certainty can be found in this uncertaine world, so Gorinius (for that shall be this Usurers name) after many a gouty pang that had pincht his exteriour parts, many a curse of the people that mounted into Heaven's presence, was at last, with his last summons, by a deadly disease arrested, where-against when he had long contended, and was by Phisitions given ouer, he cald his two Sonnes before him; and willing to performe the old Proverb *Qualis vita, finis ita*, he thus prepared himselfe, and admonished them. My Sonnes (for so your mother said you were) and so I assure my selfe one of you is, and of the other I will make no doubt.

You see the time is come, which I thought would never have approched, and we must now be separated, I feare never to meete againe. This fifteene yeeres daily have I lived vexed with disease, and might I live fifteene more, howsoever miserably, I should think it happy: But Death is relentlesse and will not be intreated: witlesse, and knows not what good my Gold might doe him: Senselesse, and hath no pleasure in the delightfull places I would offer him. In briefe I thinke he hath with this sole, my eldest sonne, been brought up in the Universitie, and therefore accounts, that in riches is no vertue. But you my Sonne (laying then his hand on the youngers head) have thou another Spirit: for without wealth life is a death: What is Gentry if wealth be wanting, but base terme beggery? Some comfort yet it is unto me, to see how many Gallants, sprung of noble parents, have crouch't to Gorinius to have sight of his gold: O Gold, deered

Gold,

Gold, admired Gold! and have lost their patrimonies to Gorinius because they have not returned by their day that adored creature? How many Schollers have written rimes in Gorinius praysle, and received (after long capping and reverence) a sixpeny reward, in signe of my superficiall liberality. Briefly, my young Lucanio, how I have bene reverenced thou knowst, when honester men, I confesse, have ben set farre off; for, to be rich, is to be any thing; wise, honest, worshipfull, or what not? I tell thee my sonne, when I came first to this Citty, my whole wardrobe was only a sute of white sheepskins, my wealth, an old Groat, my wonning, the wide World. At this instant (O griefe to part with it) I have in ready coyne three score thousand pounds; In Plate and Jewels fifteen thousand; in bonds and specialties as much; in land nine hundred pound by yeare: all which Lucanio, I bequeathe to thee, only I reserve for Roberto, thy well read brother, an old Groat (being the stock I first began with) wherewith I wish him to buy a groatsworth of wit; for he in my life hath reproved my manner of life, and therefore at my death shall not be contaminated with corrupt gaine. Here by the way Gentlemen, must I digresse to shew the reason of Gorinius present speech: Roberto being come from the Academy to visit his father, there was a great feast provided, where for table talke, Roberto knowing his father, and most of the company to be execrable Usurers, inveighed mightily against that abhorred vice, insomuch that hee urged teares from divers of their eyes, and compunction in some of their hearts. Dinner being past, he comes to his father, requesting him to take no offence at his liberall speech, seeing what he had uttered was truth. Angry son (said hee) no by my honesty (and that is somwhat I may say to you) but use it still, and if thou canst perswade any of my neighbors from lending upon Usury, I should have the more customers: to which, when Roberto would have replyed, he shut himselfe into his study, and fell to telling over his money.

This was Roberto's offence: now returne we to sick Gorinius

dinius; who after he had thus unequally distributed his goods and possessions, began to aske his sonnes how they liked his Bequests, either seemed agreed, and Roberto urged him with nothing more than repentance of his sinfull life: looke to thine own, said he, fond Boy; and come my Lucanio, let me give thee good councell before my death: As for you Sir, your bookes are your Counsellors, and therfore to them I bequeathe you. As for Lucanio, my only comfort, because I hope thou wilt, as thy Father, be a gatherer, let me blesse thee before I die. Multiply in wealth my Son, by any meanes possibly that thou maist, only flie Alchymie, for therein are more deceits than her beggerly Artists have words, and yet are the wretches more talkative then Women. But my meaning is, thou shouldst not stand on conscience in causes of profit, but heape treasure upon treasure for the time of neede: yet seeme to be honest, else shalt thou be held vile: frequent holy exercises, grave company, and above all use the conversation of young Gentlemen, who are so wedded to prodigallity, that once in a quarter necessity knocks at their chamber doores: proffer them kindnesse to relieve their wants, but be sure of good assurance, give fayre words till dates of payment come, and then use my course, spare none: what though they tell of conscience (as a number will talke) looke but into the dealings of the world, and thou shalt see it but idle words. Seest thou not many perish in the streets, and fall to theft for need whom small succor would relieve, then where is Conscience, and why art thou bound to use it more than other men? Seest thou not daily forgeries, perjuries, oppressions, rackings of the poore, raising of rents, inhaunsing of duties eben by them that should be all Conscience, if they meant as they speak; but Lucanio, if thou reade well this Booke (and with that he reached him Machievel's workes at large) thou shalt see what it is to be soole holy, as to make scruple of Conscience where profit presents it selfe.

Besides thou hast an instance by thy third bare brother here, who willing to doe no wrong, hath lost his Childs right: for

for who would wish any thing to him that knows not how to vſe it.

So much Lucanio for Conſcience: and yet I know not what's the reaſon, but ſomwhat ſtings me inwardly when I ſpeake of it. I Father, ſaid Roberto, it is the Worm of Conſcience that urges you at the laſt houre to remember your life that eternall life may follow your repentance. But ſoft, ſaid this miſerable Father, I feele it now, it was only a ſtitch: I will forward with my exhortation to Lucanio. As I ſaid my Sonne, make choſe of yong Gallants, by inſinuating thy ſelfe amongſt them, and be not moved to thinke their Anceſtors were famous, but conſider thine were obſcure, and that thy Father was the firſt Gentleman of the name: Lucanio thou art yet a Batchelor, and ſo keepe thée till thou méete with one that is thy equall, I meane in wealth; regard not beautie, it is but a baite to entice thy neighbors eye, and the moſt fayre are commonly moſt lond: Vſe not too many familiars, for few proue friends, and as eaſie it is to weigh the winde, as to dive into the thoughts of worldly glozers. I tell thée Lucanio, I have béene fourteene winters beſides the ods ſeaven yet ſaw I never him that I eſteem'd as my friend but Gold, that deſired creature! whom I have dearly loved, and found ſo firm a friend, as nothing to me, having it, hath béene wanting. No man but may thinke dearely of a true friend, and ſo doe I of it, laying it under ſure locks, and lodging my heart therewith.

But now (Ah my Lucanio) now muſt I leave it, and to thée I leave it with this leſſon; love none but thy ſelfe, if thou will live eſteemed. So turning him to his ſtudy where his chiefe treaſure lay, he lowd cryed out in the wiſeman's words, *O mors quam amara*; O death how bitter is thy memorie to him that hath all pleaſures in this life! and ſo with two or thrée lamentable groanes he left his life: and to make ſhort worke, was by Lucanio his ſonne interred, as the cuſtom is, with ſom ſolemnity. But leaving him that hath left the world, to him that cenſureth of every worldly man, paſſe we to his Sons,

and ſée how his long laid up ſtore is by Lucanio lookt into. The youth was of condition ſimple, shamefac't and flexible to any Councell, which Roberto perceiving, and pondering how little was left to him, grew into an inward contempt of his Fathers unequall Legacie and determinate reſolution to worke Lucanio all poſſible injury: hereupon thus converting the ſweetenelle of his ſtudy, to the ſharp thirſt of revenge, he (as Envie is ſeldom idle) ſought out fit companions to effect this unbrotherly reſolution: Neither in ſuch a caſe is ill company farre to ſeeke; for the Sea hath ſcarce ſo many ſeapoyzies as populous Cities have deceiving Syrens, whoſe eyes are Adamants, whoſe words are Witchcrafts, whoſe boyes lead downe to death. With one of theſe female Serpents Roberto conſorts, and they conclude what ever they compaſſed equally to ſhare to their contents. This match made, Lucanio was by his brother brought to the bush, where he had ſcarce pruned his wings, but he was faſt limed, and Roberto had what he expected. But that we may keepe forme, you ſhall heare how it fortuned.

Lucanio being on a time very penſive, his brother brake with him in theſe termes. I wonder Lucanio why you are ſo diſconſolate, that want not any thing in the World, that may worke your content. If wealth may delight a man, you are with that ſufficiently furniſhed; if credit may procure a man any comfort, your word, I know well, is as well accepted as any mans Obligation: In this Citie are faire buildings and pleaſant Gardens, and cauſe of ſolace, of them I am aſſured you have your choice. Conſider brother, you are young, then plod not altogether in meditating on our Fathers precepts: which howſoever they ſavored of profit, were moſt unſavorily to one of your yeeres applyed. You muſt not thinke but certain Merchants of this City expect your company, ſundry Gentlemen deſire your familiarity, and by converſing with ſuch, you will be accounted a Gentleman; otherwiſe a peaſant, if you live thus obſcurely. Beſides, which I had almoſt forgot, and then had all the reſt been nothing, you

are

are a man by nature furnished with all exquisite proportion, worthy the love of any courtly Lady be she never so amorous; you have wealth to maintaine her (of women not little longed for:) words to court her you shall not want, for my selfe shall be your Secretary. Briefly, why stand I to distinguish ability in particularities, when in one word it may be said (which no man can gainsay) Lucanio lacketh nothing to delight a wife nor any thing but a wife to delight him: My yong Master being thus clawde, and puft up with his own praise, made no longer delay, but having on his holy-day hose, he tricked himselfe up, and like a fellow that meant good soth, hee clapped his brother on the shoulder, and said; Faith brother Roberto and yee say the word let's goe seeke a wife while it is hot, both of us together, I'le pay well, and I dare turne you lose to say as well as any of them all: Well, I'le doe my best, said Roberto, and since you are so forward, let's goe now and try our good fortune.

With this forth they walke, and Roberto went directly towards the house where Lamilia (for so we call the Curtizan) kept her Hospitall, which was in the Suburbs of the City, pleasantly seated, and made more delectable by a pleasant Garden wherein it was scituate. No sooner came they within kenne, but Pistresse Lamilia, like a cunning Angler made ready her change of baytes, that shee might effect Lucanio's bane: And to begin, shee discovered from her windowe her beauteous inticing face, and taking her Lute in her hand, that she might the rather allure, she sung this Sonnet with a delicious voice.

La-

Lamilia's Song.

FIE, fie on blinde fancy,
It hinders youth's joy
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count love a toy.

When Love learned first, the A B C. of delight,
And knew no figures, nor conceited Phrase:
He simply gave to one deserv her right,
He led not Lovers in dark winding wayes,
He plainely wild to love, or flatly answered no;
But now who lists to prove, shall finde it nothing so.
Fie, fie then on fancy,
It hinders youths joy:
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count love a toy.

For since he learnd to use the Poets pen,
He learned likewise with smoothing words to faine,
Witching chaste eares with trothlesse tongues of men,
And wronged faith with falshood and disdaine.
He gives a promise now, anon he sweareth no,
Who lifteth for to prove, shall finde his changing so:
Fie, fie then on fancie,
It hinders youths joy,
Faire Virgins learne by me,
To count love a toy.

While this painted Sepulchre was shadowing her corrupting guilt, Hiena-like, aluring to destruction, Roberto and Lucanio under the windowe kept even pace with every stop of her Instrument, but especially my yong Ruffler (that before time like a Bird in a Cage, had béene prentice for three lives, or one and twenty yeeres at the least to extreme Auarice his deceased Father) D'twas a wonder to see how hée somtime simpered it, striving to set a countenance on his turn'd face, that it might séeme of wainscot proofe, to behold her face without blushing; anon he would stroake his bow-bent leg, as though he meant to shoote loves arrowes from his shins: then wip't his chin (for his beard was not yet growne) with a gold wrought hand-kertchife, whence of purpose hée let fall a handfull of Angels. This golden shower was no sooner rained, but Lamilia ceast her song, and Roberto (assuring himselfe the fole was caught) came to Lucanio (that stood now as one that had star'd Medusa in the face) and awaked him from his amazement with these words. What in a trance brother? Whence spring these dumps? Are you amazed at this obiect, or long you to become loves subiect? Is there not difference betwéen this delectable life, and the imprisonment you have all your life hitherto endured? If the sight and hearing of this harmonious beautie, worke in you effects of wonder, what will the possession of so divine an essence, wherin Beauty and Art dwell in their perfectest excellency? Brother said Lucanio let's use few words, and shée be no more than a woman, I trust you'l helpe me to her, and if you doe, well I say no more but I am yours till death us depart, and what is mine shall be yours world without end, Amen.

Roberto smiling at his simplenesse help't him to gather up his drop't gold, and without any more circumstance led him to Lamilia's house, and of such places it may be said as of hell.

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis.

So their doores are ever open to entice youth to destruction

They were no sooner entred, but Lamilia her selfe like a second Helen, court-like begins to salute Roberto, yet did her wandring eye glance often at Lucanio: The effect of her entertainment consisted in these termes, that to her simple house Seignior Roberto was welcom, and his brother the better welcome for his sake; albeit his good report, confirmed by his present demeanor, were of it selfe enough to give him deserved entertainment in any place, how honorable soever. Mutuall thanks returned, they led this prodigall Childe into a Parlor garnished with goodly portraitures of amiable personages, neere which, an excellent consort of musick began at their entrance to play. Lamilia seeing Lucanio shame fac't tooke him by the hand, and tenderly wringing him, used these words. Beleeve me Gentleman, I am very sorry that our rude entertainment is such, as no way may worke your content, for this I have noted since your first entring, that your countenance hath been heavy, and the face being the glasse of the heart, assures me the same is not quiet; would ye wish any thing here that might content you, say but the word, and assure ye of present deliverance to effect your full delight. Lucanio, being so farre in love as he perswaded himselfe without her grant he could not live, had a good meaning to utter his mind, but wanting fit words, he stood like a a trewant that wanted a Prompter, or a Player, that being out of his part at his first entrance, is faine to have the booke to speake what he should: Which Roberto perceiving, replyed thus on his behalfe. Madam, the Sunn's brightnesse dazleth the beholders eyes; the Majesty of Gods, amazed humane men: Tully, prince of Orators, once fainted, though his cause was good, and he that tamed monsters, stood amazed at beauties ornaments; then blame not this poore man though he replied not, for he is blinded with the beauty of your Sunne-darkening eyes, made mute with the celestiall Organ of your voice, and feare of that rich ambush of Amber-colour'd darts, whose points are leveled against his heart. Well Seignior Roberto said she how ever you interpret their sharp level be sure they are not bent

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to doe him hurt, and but that modesty blinds us poore maidens from uttering the inward sorrowe of our minds, perchance the cause of griefe is ours, howsoever men doe colour, for as I am a Virgin I protest (and therewithall shée tainted her cheekes with a vermillion blush) I never saw Gentleman in my life, in my eye, so gracious as is Lucanio, only that is my griefe, that eyther I am despised, for that he scornes to speake or else (which is my greater sorrow) I feare he cannot speake. Not speake Gentlewoman, quoth Lucanio? that were a jest indéede: yes, I thanke God, I am sound of winde and limbe, only my heart is not as it was wont; but and you be as good as your word, that will soone be well, and so craving ye of more acquaintance, in token of my plaine meaning, receive this Diamond which my old Father loved déerely, and with that delivered her a Ring, wherein was a pointed Diamond of wonderfull worth. Which shé accepting with a low congie, returned him a silke Riband for a favor, tied with a true Lovers knot, which hé fastned under a faire Jewell on his Beaver felt.

After this *Diomedis & Glauci permutatio*, my yong master waxed cranke, and the musick continuing, was very forward in dancing, to shew his cunning; and so desiring them to play on a horne pipe, lay'd on the pavement lustily with his leaden héeles, corvetting like a stéede of Seignior Roccoes teaching; and wanted nothing but bels to be a hobby-horse in a Morrice. Yet was he soothed in his folly, and what ever he did Lamilia counted excellent; her praysle made him proud, insomuch, that if he had not béen intreated, he would rather have died in his dance than left off, to shew his Mistresse delight. At last reasonably perswaded, séeing the Table furnished, he was contented to cease and settle himselfe to his victuals, on which (having before labored) he fed lustily, especially of a Woodcock pie, wherewith Lamilia his Carver plenteously plyed him. Full dishes having furnish't empty stomacks, and Lucanio thereby got leisure to talke, falls to discourse of his wealth, his lands, his bonds, his ability, and how himselfe and all he

had was at Madam Lamilia's disposing; desiring her above his Brother to tell him simply what she meant. Lamilia replyed, My sweet Lucanio, how I esteeme of thee mine eyes doe witnesse, that like handmaids have attended thy beauteous face ever since I first beheld thee; yet seeing love that lasteth, gathereth by degrees his liking, let this for that suffice: If I finde thee firme, Lamilia will be faithfull, if fleeting, she must of necessity be unfortunate, that having never seen any whom before she could affect, thee should be of him injuriously forsaken. Nay, said Lucanio, I dare say my brother here will give his word for that: I accept your own said Lamilia, for with me your credit is better than your brothers. Roberto brake off their amorous prattle with these speeches: Sith eyther of you are of other so fond at the first sight, I doubt not but time will make your love more firme. Yet Madam Lamilia, although my brother and you be thus forward, som crosse chance may come; for multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque labra. And for a morning to teach you both wit, I'le tell you an old wives tale.

Before you goe on with your Tale (quoth Mistresse Lamilia) let me give you a caveat by the way, which shall be figured in a Fable.

Lami-

Lamilia's Fable.

THe Fore on a time came to visit the Gray, partly for kindred, chiefly for craft; and finding the hole empty of all other company saving only one Badger, inquiring the cause of his solitarinesse, he described the sodain death of his Dam and Syre with the rest of his consorts. The Fore made a Friday face counterfeiting sorrow, but concluding that deaths stroke was inevitable, perswaded him to seeke some fit mate wherewith to match. The Badger sone agrée, so forth they went, and in their way met with a wanton Ewe straging from the fold; the For bad the Badger play the tall stripling, and strut on his tiptoes; for (quoth he this Ewe is lady of all these lands, and her brother chiefe Bel-wether of sundry flocks. To be short, by the Fores perswasion, there would be a perpetuall league betwéne her harmlesse kindred and all other devouring beasts, for that the Badger was to them all allied; seduced, she yelded, and the For conducted them to the Badgers habitation; where drawing her aside under colour of exhortation, pul'd out her throat to satisfie his greedy thirst. Here I should note, a pong whelp that viewed their walke, informed the Shepheard of what hapned. They followed and trapped the For and Badger to the hole, the For afore had craftily conveyed himselfe away,

the Shepheard found the Badger raving for the Ew's murther, his lamentation being held for counterfeit, was by the shepheards dog worried. The Fox escaped. The Ewe was spoyled, and ever since between the Badgers and the Dogs hath continued a mortall enmity: And now be advised Roberto (quoth shé) goe forward with your Tale, seeke not by sly insinuation to turne our wyth to sorrowe. Goe to Lamilia (quoth he) you feare what I meane not, but howsoever ye take it. I'le forward with my Tale.

(*,*)

Roberto's

Robertoes Tale.

IN the North parts there dwelt an old Squire that had a yong daughter to his Heire, who had (as I know madam Lamilia you have had) many youthfull Gentlemen that long time ſued to obteine her love. But ſhée knowing her own perfection (as women are by nature proud) would not to any of them vouchſafe favor; inſomuch that they perceiving her relentleſſe, ſhewed themſelves not altogether witleſſe, but left her to her fortune when they found her frowardneſſe. At laſt it fortuned among other ſtrangers, that a Farmers ſonne viſited her Fathers houſe; on whom at the firſt ſight ſhé was enamoured, hée likewiſe on her. Tokens of love paſt betweén them, either acquainted others parents of their choice, and they kindly gave their conſent. Short tale to make, married they were, and great ſolemnity was at the wedding feaſt. A yong Gentleman that had béene long a Suter to her, bering that the Sonne of a Farmer ſhould be ſo preferred, caſt in his mind by what meanes (to marre their merryment) he might ſteale away the Bride: herupon he conferes with an old Beldam, called mother Gunbey, dwelling thereby, whoſe counſell having taken, he fell to his practiſe and drift, and proceéded thus. In the afternoone, when dancers were very buſie, hé takes the Bride by the hand, & after a turn or two, tels her in her eare he had a ſecret to impart unto her, appointing her in any wiſe in the evening to find a time to confer with him: ſhe promiſed

ſhe

she would and so they parted. Then goes he to the Bridegroome, and with protestation of entire affects, protests that the great sorrow he takes at that which he must utter, whereon depended his especial credit, if it were known the matter by him should be discovered. After the Bridegroomes promise of secrecie, the Gentleman tels him that a friend of his received that morning from the Bride a letter, wherein she willed him with some strèame horse to wait her comming at a Parkeside, for that shée detested him in her heart as a base Country Hinde, with whom her Father compelled her to marry. The Bride groome almost out of his wits, beganne to bite his lip. Nay, saith the Gentleman, if you will by me be advised, you shall save her credit, win her by kindnesse, and yet prevent her wanton complot. As how said the Bridegroome: Marry thus said the Gentleman: In the evening (for till the Guests be gone she intends not to gadde,) get you on horse-back, and seeme to be of the company that attends her comming. I am appointed to bring her from the house to the Parke and from thence fetch a winding compasse of a mile about, but to turne unto old mother Gunbeyes house, where her lover my friend abides: when she alights, I will conduct her to a chamber far from his lodging, but when the lights are out, she expects her adulterous copesmate, your selfe (as reason is) shall prove her bedfellow, where privately you may reprove her, and in the morning early returne home without trouble. As for the gentleman my friend, I will excuse her absence to him by saying she mockt thee with her maid in stead of her selfe, whom when I knew at her lighting, I disdained to bring her unto his presence. The bridegroome gave his hand it should be so.

Now by the way we must understand, this mother Gunbey had a daughter, whom all that day sate heavily at home with a Willow Garland, for that the Bridegroome (if he had dealt faithfully) should have wedded her before any other. But men (Lamillia) are unconstant, many now a dayes makes the match, or else the match is mar'd.

But

But to the matter: the Bridegroome and the Gentleman thus agreed, he tooke his time, conferred with the Bride, perswaded her, that her husband (notwithstanding his faire shew at the marriage) had sworne to his old sweet heart, their neighbour Gunbeyes Daughter, to bee that night her Bedfellow: and if shee would bring her Father, his Father, and other friends to the house at midnight, they should find it so.

At this the yong Gentlewoman inwardly vext, to be by a peasant so abused, promised if she saw likelyhood of slipping away, that then she would doe as he directed.

All this thus sorting, the old womans daughter was trickly attired, ready to furnish this pageant, for her old mother provided all things necessary.

Well, Supper past, dauncing ended, all the guests would home, and the Bridegroome pretending to bring some friend to his home, got his horse, and to the parke side he rode, and stayed which the horsemen that attended the Gentleman.

Anon came Marian like Mistris Bride, and mounted behind the Gentleman, away they past, fetcht their compasse, and at last alight at the old wives house, where sodenly she is conveyed to her chamber, and the Bridegroome sent to keep her company, where he had scarce devised how to begin his exhortation, but the father of his bride knockt at chamber doore: at which being somewhat amazed, yet thinking to turne it to a jest, sith his wife as he thought was in bed with him, he opend the doore saying; Father you are heartily welcom, I wonder how you found us out heere; this device to remove our selves, was with my wives consent, that we might rest quietly without the maids and bachelors disturbing us. But where is your wife, said the gentleman? why here in bed said he. I thought, quoth the other, my daughter had been your wife, for sure I am to day she was given you in marriage. You are merrily disposed, said the Bridegroom, what think you I have another wife? I think but as you speak, quoth the Gentleman, for my daughter is below, and you say your wife is in bed. Below (sayd he) you are a merry man: with that casting on a night-goun,

her went downe, where when he saw his wife, the Gentleman his Father, and a number of his friends assembled, he was so confounded, that how to behave himselfe he knew not, onely he cried out that he was deceived. At this the old Woman arrived, and making her selfe ignorant of all the whole matter, inquires the cause of that sodden tumult: When she was told the new Wive-growne was found in bed with her daughter, she exclaimed against so great an injury. Marian was called in quorum: she justified it was by his allurement; he being condemned by all their consents, was judged unworthy to have the Gentlewoman unto his wife, and compelled (for escaping of punishment) to marry Marian: and the young Gentleman (for his care in discovering the Farmers sonnes lewdnesse) was recompenc't with the Gentlewomans ever during love.

Quoth Lamilia, and what of this: Nay nothing sayd Roberto; but that I have told you the effects of suddaine love: yet the best is, my brother is a maidenly Batchelor, and for your selfe you have not beene troubled with many suters. The fewer the better, sayd Lucanio. But brother, I can you little thanks for this tale, he replies: I pray you use other Table talke. Lets then talke, quoth Lamilia, and you (Seignio Lucanio) and I will goe to the Chesse. To Chesse, said he, what meane you by that: It is a game, said she, that the first danger is but a checke, the worst, the giving of a mate. Well, said Roberto, that game ye have beene at already then, for you checkt him first with your beauty, and gave your selfe for mate to him by your humity. That is well taken brother, said Lucanio, so have we past our game at Chesse. Will yee play at Tables then, said she: I cannot quoth he, for I can goe no further with my game, if I be once taken. Will yee play then at Cardes: I sayd he if it be one and thirty. That fooles game, said she: Marke all to Hazard, said Roberto, and brother you shall make me for an houre or two: contented quoth he. So to sit they went, and fortune so favoured Lucanio, that while they continued square play, he was no loser. Anon cu-

stnage

ſinage came about, and his Angels being double winged, flew cleane from before him. Lamilia being the winner, prepared a banquet, which finiſhed, Roberto adviſed his brother to depart home, and to furniſh himſelfe with more crownes, leſt hée were out crackt with new commers.

Lucanio loth to be out-countenanc't, followed his advice, deſiring him to attend his returne, which he before determined unrequeſted: for as ſoone as his brothers backe was turned, Roberto begins to reckon with Lamilia, to be a ſharer as well in the monie deceitfully won, as in the Diamond ſo willfully given. But the ſecundum mores meritrices, jeſted thus with the ſcholler. Why Roberto, are you ſo well read, and yet ſhew your ſelfe ſo ſhallow witted, to déeme Women ſo weake of conceit, that they ſée not into mens demerits. Suppoſe (to make you my ſtale to catch the Woodcocke your brother) that my tongue over running mine intent. I ſpake of liberall reward: but what I promiſed, there is the point: at leaſt what I part with. I will bée well adviſed. It may bee you will thus reaſon: Had not Roberto trained Lucanio unto Lamilia's lure, Lucanio had not now bén Lamilias prey: therefore, ſith by Roberto ſhe poſſeſſeth her prize, Roberto merits an equall part. Monſtrous abſurd if ſo you reaſon, as well you may reaſon thus: Lamilia's dogge hath kild her a Déere, therefore his Miſtreſſe muſt make him a paſty. No more pennileſſe Poet, thou art beguild in me, and yet I wonder how thou couldeſt, thou haſt béene ſo often beguild. But it fareth with licentious men, as with the chaced Boare in the ſtreame, who being greatly refreſhed with ſwimming, never feeleth any ſmart untill he periſh, recureleſſly wounded with his owne weapons. Reaſonleſſe Roberto, that having but a Brothers place, asked a Lenders reward. Faithles Roberto, that haſt attempted to betray thy Brother, irreligiouſly forſaking thy wife, deſervedly béene in thy Fathers eye an abject: thinkeſt thou Lamilia ſo loſe, to conſort with one ſo lewd. No hypocrite, the ſweet Gentleman thy brother, I will till death love, and thé while I live, loath. This ſhare Lamilia gives

gives thee, other getest thou none.

As Roberto would have replied, Lucanio approached; to whom Lamilia discourst the whole deceit of his brother, and never ceased intimating malicious arguments, till Lucanio vterly refused Roberto for his brother, and forever forbad him his house. And when he would have yelded reasons and former excuse, Lucanio's impatience (urged by her importunate malice) forbad all reasoning with them that were reasonlesse, and to giving him Jack Drum's entertainment, shut him out of doores; whom we will follow and leave Lucanio to the mercy of Lamilia: Roberto in an extreme extasie, rent his hayre, curst his destiny, blam'd his treachery, but most of all exclaimed against Lamilia; and, in her, against all entising Curtezans, in these termes.

What meant the Poets in invective verse,
To sing Medeas shame, and Scyllas pride,
Calipsoes charmes, by which so many dide?
Onely for this, their vices they rehearse,
That curious wits, which in the world converse,
May shun the dangers and emising shoes
Of such false Sirens, those home breeding foes,
That from their eyes their venom doe dispersse,
So soone kils not the Basiliske with sight,
The Vipers tooth is not so venemous,
The Adders tongue not halfe so dangerous,
As they that beare the shadow of delight,
Who chaine blind youths intramels of their hayre,
Till waste brings woe, and sorrow hastes despaire.

With this he laid his head on his hand, and lean'd his elbow on the ground, sighing out sadly

Heu patior telis vulnera facta meis,

On the other side of the hedge sat one that heard his sorrow, who

who getting over, came towards him and brake off his pallor. When he approached, he saluted Roberto in this sort.

Gentleman, quoth he, (for so you seem) I have by chaunce heard you discourse some part of your griefe, which appeareth to be more than you will discover, or I can conceit. But if you vouchsafe such simple comfort, as my ability will yeld, assure your selfe, that I will endevour to doe the best, that either may procure your profit, or bring your pleasure: the rather, for that I suppose you are a Scholler, and pitie it is, men of learning should live in lacke.

Roberto wondring to heare such good words, for that this iron age affords few that esteeme of vertue, returned him thankfull gratulations, and (urged by necessity) uttered his present griefe, beseeching his advice how he might be imployed. Why easily quoth he, and greatly to your benefit: for men of my profession, get by Schollers their whole living. What is your profession, said Roberto, Truely sir, said he, I am a player. A player, quoth Roberto, I take you rather for a Gentleman of great living, for if by outward habit men should be censured, I tell you, you would be taken for a substantiall man. So am I where I dwell, (quoth the player) reputed able at my proper cost, to build a Wind mill. What though the world once went hard with me, when I was faine to carry my playing Fardel a foot-backe: Tempora Mutantur, I know you know the meaning of it better than I; but I thus conster it, it is otherwise now: for my very share in playing apparell, will not be sold for two hundred pounds: truly (said Roberto) it is strange, that you should so prosper in that baine practice, for that it seems to me, your voice is nothing gratious. Nay then said the Player, I mislike your judgement: Why I am as famous for Delphrygus, and the King of Fairies, as ever was any of my time. The twelue Labours of Hercules have I terribly thundred on the Stage, and played three Scenes of the Diuill in the high way to heaven. Have ye so (said Roberto) then I pray you pardon me. Nay more (quoth the player) I can serue to make a pretty speech, for I was a country

Author, passing at a mazall, for it was I that pend the Mazall of mans wit, the Dialogue of Dives, and for seven yeeres space was absolute interpreter of the Puppets. But now my Almanacke is out of date.

The people make no estimation
Of morals, teaching Education.

Was not this pretty for a plaine rime extempore: if ye will yee shall have more. Nay, it is enough, said Roberto, but how meane you to use me? Why sir, in making Playes, said the other for which you shall bee well payd, if you will take the paines.

Roberto perceiving no remedie, thought it best to respect his present necessity, to trie his wit, went with him willingly: who lodged him at the townes end in a house of retaile, where what happened our Poet you shall hereafter heare. There by conversing with bad company, he grew A malo in pejus, falling from one vice to another, and so having found a veine to finger Crownes, he grew cranker than Lucanio, who by this time began to droope, being thus delt with all by Lamilia. She having bewitched him with her enticing wiles caused him to consume in lesse than two yeares, that infinite treasure gathered by his father, with so many a poore mans curse. His lands sold, his Jewels pawnd, his mony wasted, hee was cashiered by Lamilia that had cosened him of all. Then walked he like one of D. Humphryes Squires, in a thred bare cloake, his hose ydlone out with his heeles, and unseamed lest his feet should sweat with heate; now (as witlesse as he was) he remembred his fathers words, his kindnes to his brother, his carelesnesse of himselfe. In this sorrow he sate downe on pennilesse bench, where when Opus and Vsus told him by the chimes in his stomacke, it was time to fall unto meat, he was faine with the Camelion to feed upon the ayre, and make patience his repast.

Whilst he was at his feast, Lamilia came flaunting by garnish

nished with the jewels, whereof shee beguiled him, which light served to close his stomack after his cold cheare. Roberto hearing of his brothers beggery, albeit he had little remorse of his miserable state, yet did he seeke him out, to use him as a property, whereby Lucanio was some what provided for. But being of simple nature, he served but for a blocke to whet Robertoes wit on, which the poore sole perceiving, he forsooke all other hopes of life, and fell to be a notorious Pander, in which detested course he continued till death. But Roberto now famoused for an Arch-play making Poet, his purse like the sea, sometime swelt, anon like the same sea fell to a low ebbe, yet seldome he wanted, his labours were so well estæmed. Parry this rule he kept, what ever he fingered aforehand, was the certaine meanes to unbinde a bargaine; and being asked why he so sleightly dealt with them that did him good: It becomes me, saith he to be contrary to the world, for commonly when vulgar men receive earnest, they doe performe; when I am paid any thing before hand, I breake my promise. He had shift of lodgings, where in every place his hostesse writ up the woefull remembrance of him; his Laundresse and his boy, for they that were ever in household, besides retayners in sundry other places. His company were lightly the lewdest persons in the land, apt for pilfery, periury, forgery, or any villany. Of these he knew the cast to dogge at cards, coosin at Dice, by these he learned the legerdemaines of nips, foysts conicatchers, crosbiters, lifts, high Lawyers, and all the rable of that uncleane generation of vipers: and pithily could he paint out their whole courses of craft: So cunning he was in all crafts, as nothing rested in him almost but craftinesse. How often the Gentlewoman his wife laboured vainely to recall him, is lamentable to note: but as one given ever to all lewdnesse, he communicated her sorrowfull lines among his lose truls, that jested at her bootlesse laments. If he could any way get credit on scores, hee would then brag his creditors carried stones, comparing every round circle to a groning O. procured by a painfull burthen. The shamefull end of sundry his

con-

consorts, deservedly punished, for their amisse, wrought no compunction in his heart: of which one, brother to a brothell he kept, was trust under a tree, as round as a ball.

To some of his swearing companions thus it happened: A crue of them sitting in a Taberne carowsing, it fortuned an honest gentleman and his friend to enter their rowme, som of them being acquainted with him in their domineering drunken vaine would have noe nay, but down he must sit with them being placed, no remedy there was, but he must needs keepe even compasse with their unsteimely carowsing: which he refusing, they fell from high words to sound strokes, so that with much adoe the gentleman saved his owne, and shifted from their company. Being gone, one of these tiplers forsoth, lackt a gold ring: the other sware they saw the Gentleman take it from his hand. Upon this the Gentleman was indited before a Judge, these honest men are deposed: whose wisdome weighing the time of the brayle, gave light to the jury, what power wine washing poyson had, they according unto conscience found the Gentleman not guilty: and God released by that verdict the innocent.

With his accusers thus it fared: the one of them for murther was worthily executed: the other, never since prospered: the third, sitting not along after upon a lusty horse, the beast dyed suddenly under him. God amend the man.

Roberto every day acquainted with these examples, was notwithstanding nothing bettered, but rather hardned in wickednes. At last was that place justified; God warneth men by dreames and visions in the night, by knowne examples in the day: but if he returne not, he comes upon him with judgement that shall be felt. For now, when the number of deceits caused Roberto to bee hatefull almost to all men, his immeasurable drinking had made him the perfect image of the dropsie, and the loathsome scourge of Lust, tyrannized in his bones: Living in extreme poberty, and having nothing to pay but chalke, which now his Host accepted not for currant, this miserable man lay comfortlesly languishing, having

but

but one groat left (the juſt proportion of his Father's Legacy) which looking on, he cryed, O now it is too late, too late to buy wit with thée, and therfore will I ſée, if I can ſell to careleſſe youth what I negligently forgat to buy.

Here (Gentlemen) breake I off Roberto's ſpéech, whoſe life in moſt part agréeing with mine, found one ſelfe puniſhment, as I have done. Hereafter ſuppoſe me the ſaid Roberto, and I will goe on with that he promiſed: Greene will ſend you now his groatſworth of wit, that never ſhewed a mites worth in his life; and though no man now be by to doe me good, yet ere I die, I will by my repentance endevor to doe all men good.

Deceiving world that with alluring toyes,
Haſt made my life the ſubject of thy ſcorne:
And ſcorneſt now to lend thy fading joyes,
T'out lenght my life, whome friends have left forlorn,
How well are they that die ere they be borne.
And never ſee thy ſleights, which few men ſhun,
Till unawares they helpleſſe are undone

Oft have I ſung of love and of his fire,
But now I finde that Poet was adviſde
Which made full feaſts increaſers of deſire,
And proves weak love was with the poore deſpiſde
For when the life with food is not ſuffic'd,
What thoughts of love was, what motion of delight,
What pleaſance can proceed from ſuch a wight?

Witneſſe my want the murderer of my wit,
My raviſh't ſenſe of wonted fury reft,
(Wants ſuch conceit, as ſhould in Poems ſit)
See downe the ſorrow wherin I am left
But therefore have high heavens their gift bereft;
Becauſe ſo long they lent them free to uſe,
And I ſo long their bounty did abuſe.

O that a yeare were granted me to live,
And for that yeare my former wits restorde,
What rules of life, what counsell would I give;
How should my sinne with sorrow be deplorde?
But I must die of every man abhorde;
Time loosely spent will not againe be wonne,
My time is loosely spent and I undone.

O horenda fames! how terrible are thy assaults: But *Vermis Conscientiæ* more wounding are thy stings. Ah Gentlemen that live to reade my broken and confused lines, looke not I should (as I was wont) delight you with vaine fantasies, but gather my follies all together, and as you would deale with so many parricides, cast them into the fire; call them Telegones, for now they kill their Father, and every lewd line in them written is a deep piercing wound to my heart, every idle houre spent by any in reading them, brings a million of sorrows to my soule. O that the teares of a miserable man (for never yet was any man more miserable) might wash their memory out with my death, and that those workes together with me might be interred: But sith they cannot, let my last worke witnes against them, with me, how I detest them: Black is the remembrance of my black workes, blacker than night, blacker than death, blacker than hell.

Learne wit by my repentance (and let these few rules following be regarded in your lives.

1. In all your actions, set God before your eyes, for the feare of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; Let his Word be a lanterne unto your feete, and a light unto your paths, then shall you stand as firm Rocks, and not be moved.

2 Beware of loking back, for God will not be mocked; of him that hath received much, much shall be demanded.

3 If thou be single, and canst abstaine, turne thy eyes from vanity, for there is a kinde of women bearing the faces of Angels, but the hearts of Devils, able to entrap the elect, if it were possible.

4 If thou be married, forsake not the wife of thy youth to follow strange flesh, for whoremongers and adulterers the Lord will judge; the dores of a Harlot leadeth down to death and in her lips there dwels destruction; her face is deck't with odors, but she bringeth a man to a morsell of bread and nakednesse, of which my selfe am instance.

5 If thou be left rich, remember those that want, and so deale, that by thy wilfulnesse thy selfe want not; let not Taverners and Victualers be thy Executors, for they will bring thée to a dishonorable grave.

6 Oppresse no man, for the cry of the wronged ascendeth to the eares of the Lord; neither delight to encrease by Usury, lest thou lose thy habitation in the everlasting Tabernacle.

7 Beware of building thy house to thy neighbors hurt, for the stones will cry to the timber; We were laid together in blood, and those that so erect houses, calling them by their names, shall ly in the grave like sheepe, and death shall gnaw upon their soules.

8 If thou be poore, be also patient, and strive not to grow rich by indirect meanes, for goods so gotten shall vanish away like smoake.

9 If thou be a father, master or teacher, joyne good examples with good counsell, else little availe Precepts where life is different.

10 If thou be a sonne or servant, despise not reproofe, for though correction be bitter at the first, it bringeth pleasure in the end.

Had I regarded the first of these rules, or bèen obedient at the last, I had not now at my last end bèen left thus desolate; but now, though to my selfe I give consilium post facta, yet to others they may serve for timely precepts. And therfore while life gives leave, I will send warning to my old consorts, which have lived as lewdly as my selfe, albeit weakneſſe will scarce suffer me to write, yet to my fellow Schollers about this Citty, will I direct these few ensuing lines.

To those Gentlemen his quondam acquaintance, that spend their witts in making Playes, R. G. wisheth a better exercise, and wisdom to prevent his extremities.

IF wofull experience may move you (Gentlemen) to beware; or unheard of wretchednesse intreate you to take heede, I doubt not but you will looke back with sorrow on your time past, and looke forward with repentance to spend that which is to come. Wonder not (for with that will I first beginne) thou famous gracer of Tragedians, that Greene, who hath said with the like the foole in his heart, there is no God; should now give glory unto his greatnesse: for penetrating is his power, his hand lyes heavy upon me, he hath spoken unto me with a voyce of thunder, and I have left, he is a God that can punish enemies. Why should thy excellent wit, his gift be so blinded, that thou shouldest give no glory to the Giver? Is it pestilent Machiavilian pollicie that thou hast studied? O punish folly! What are his rules but meere confused mockeries, able to extirpate in small time the generation of mankinde. For if, *Sic volo, sic jubeo*, hold in those that are able to commaund: and if it be lawfull *Fas et Nefas*, to doe any thing that is beneficiall; onely Tyrants should possesse the Earth: they striving to exceed in tyranny, should reb to o-

ther be a slaughter man: till the mightiest out living all, one stroke were left for death, that in one age mans life should end The Brother of this Diabolicall Atheisme is dead, and in his life had never the felicity he aymed at: but as he beganne in craft, lived in feare, and ended in dispaire. *Quam inscrutabilia sunt Dei judicia!* This murderer of many Brethren, had his conscience seared like Caine: this betrayer of him that gave his life for him, inherited the portion of Judas: this Apostata perished as ill as Julian: and wilt thou my Friend be his Disciple? Looke unto me, by him perswaded to that Liberty, and thou shalt finde it an Infernall bondage. I know the least of my demerits merit this miserable death, but wilfull striving against knowne truth, exceedeth all the terrors of my soule. Deferre not (with me) till this last poynt of extremity: for little knowest thou, how in the end thou shalt be visited.

With thee I joyne young Juvenall, that biting Satyrist, that lastly with me together writ a Comedy. Sweet Boy might I advise thee, be advised, and get not many enemies by bitter words inveigh against vaine men, for thou canst doe it, no man better, no man so well: thou hast a liberty to reprove all, and name none: for one being spoken to, all are offended, none being blamed, no man is injured. Stop shallow water still running it will rage, tread on a worme, and it will turne: then blame not Schollers who are vexed with sharpe and bitter Lines, if they reproove thy too much liberty of reproofe.

And thou no lesse deserving than the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driven (as my selfe) to extreme shifts, a little have I to say to thee: were it not an idolatrous oath, I would sweare by Sweet S. George, thou art unworthy better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. Base minded men all three of you, if by my miserie yee be not warned: for unto none of you (like me) sought those Burrers to cleave: those Puppets (I meane) that speake from our mouths those Antickes garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they al have bin beholding: is it not like that you to

whom they all haue beene beholding, shall (were yée in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? Yes, trust them not: for there is an vpstart Crow beautified with our Feathers, that with his Tygers heart, wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse, as the best of you; and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the only Shake-scene in a Country. Oh that I might intreat your rare wits to bee imployed in more profitable courses: and let these Apes imitate your past Excellence, and neuer more acquaint them with your admired Inventions. I know the best husband of you all, will neuer proue an Vsurer, and the kindst of them all, will not proue a kind Nurse: yet whilst you may seeke you better Masters: for it is pitty, men of such rare wits should bée subiect to the pleasures of such rude groomes.

In this I might insert two more, that both haue writ against these buckram Gentlemen: but let their owne workes serue to witnesse against their owne wickednesse, if they perseuer to maintaine any more such peasants. For other new comming, I leaue them to the mercy of these painted monsters, who (I doubt not) will driue the best minded to despise them: for the rest, it skils not though they make a iest at them.

But now returne Ragginе to you three, knowing my misery is to you no newes: and let me heartily intreat you to be warned by my harmes. Delight not (as I haue done) in prophane oaths, for from the blasphemers house, a curse shall not depart: Despise drunkennes, which wasteth the wit, and maketh men all equall vnto beasts: Flie Lust, as the deaths man of the soule, and defile not the Temple of the holy Ghost. Abhor those Epicures, whose lose life hath made Religion loathsome to your eares, and when they sooth you with termes of mastership, remember Robert Greene, whom they haue often so flattered, perishes now for want of comfort. Remember Gentlemen, your liues are like to many light tapers, that are with care deliuered to all of you to maintaine: these, with wind-puft wrath, may be extinguished, with drun-

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kenesse put out, with negligence let fall: for mans time of it selfe is not so short, but it is more shortned by sinne. The fire of my light is now at the last snuffe, and the want of wherewith to sustaine it, there is no substance for life to feed on. Trust not then (I beseech you) to such weake staves: for they are as changeable in minde, as in many attires. Well my hand is tyred, and I am forc't to leave where I would begin: for a whole booke cannot containe the wrongs, which I am forc't to knit up in some few lines of words.

Desirous that you should live though himselfe be dying

ROBERT GREENE.

Now to all men I bid farewell in this sort, with this conceited Fable of the old Cœmedian *Æsop*.

AN Ant and a Grashopper walking together on a Greene, the one carelesly skiping, the other carefully prying what Winter's provision was scattered in the way: the Grashopper scorning (as wantons sometimes will) this needelesse thrift (as he termed it) reproved him thus.

THe

The greedy miser thirsteth still for gaine,
His thrift is theft, his weale works others woe;
That foole is fond which will in caves remaine,
When 'mongst faire sweetes he may at pleasure goe.

To this the Ant perceiving the Grashoppers meaning quickly replyed.

The thrifty husband spares what unthrifts spends,
His thrift no theft, for dangers to povide,
Trust to they selfe, small hope in want yeeld frinds,
A cave is better than the desarts wide.

In short time these two parted, the one to his pleasure, the other to his labor. Anon Harvest grew on and rest from the Grashopper his wonted moisture. Then weakely skips he to the meadowes brinke, where till fell winter he aboad. But stormes continually powring, he went for succor to the Ant his old acquaintance, to whom he had scarce discovered his estate, but the little worm made this reply.

Packe hence (quoth she) thou idle lazie worme,
My house doth harbor no unthrifty mates:
Thou scornd'st to toyle, and now thou feelst the storme
And starv'st for food, while I am fed with cates,
Use noe intreats, I will relentlesse rest,
For toyling labour hates an Idle guest.

The Grashopper fooles, helples and strengthles, got into the nest broke, and in the yelding sand dig'd himselfe a pit: by which he likewise ingraved this Epitaph.

When Springs greene prime arrayde me with delight,
And every power with youthfull vigour filde,
Gave strength to work what ever fancie wilde,
I never feard the force of winters spight.

When

Groats-worth of Wit.

When first I saw the Sunne, the day begin,
And dry the mornings teares from hearbs and grasse,
I little thought his chearefull light would passe,
Till ugly night with darkenesse entr'd in,
And then day lost I mournde, spring past I waild,
But neither teares for this or that availde.

Then too too late I prais'd the Emmets paine,
That sought in spring a harbour gainst the heat,
And in the harvest gathered winters meat,
Perceiving famine, frosts, and stormy raine.

My wretched end may warne Greene springing youth,
To use delights, as toyes that will deceive,
And scorne the world, before the world them leave,
For all the worlds trust, is ruine without ruth.
Then blest art they that like the toyling Ant,
Provide in time gainst wofull winters want.

With this the Grashopper yelding to the wethers extremity, died comfortlesse without remedy. Like him my selfe: like me, shall all that trust to friends or times inconstancy. Now faint I of my last infirmity, beseeching them that shall bury my body, to publish this last farewell, written with my wretched hand.

Felicem fuisse, infaustum.

A Letter written to his Wife, found *with this Booke after his death.*

THE remembrance of many wrongs offered thée, and thy unreproved vertues, adde greater sorrow to my miserable state than I can utter, or thou conceive. Neither is it lessened by consideration of thy absence, (though shame would let mée hardly behold thy face) but exceedingly aggravated, for that I cannot (as I ought) to thy owne selfe reconcile my selfe, that thou mightest witnesse my inward woe at this instant, that have made thée a woefull wife for so long a time. But equal heaven hath denied that comfort giving at my last néed, like succor as I have sought all my life: being in this extremity as void of helpe, as thou hast béene of hope. Reason would, that after so long waste, I should not send thée a childe to bring the greater charge but consider hée is the fruit of thy wombe, in whose face regard not the Fathers so much, as thy owne perfections. He is yet Greene, and may grow straight, if he be carefully tended: otherwise apt enough (I feare me) to follow his Fathers folly. That I have offended thee highly I know; that thou canst forget my injuries, I hardly believe: yet perswade I myselfe, if thou sawst my wretched estate, thou couldest not but lament it: nay, certainely I know thou wouldest. All my wrongs mu-

ster

ker themselves about me, every evil at once plagues me. For my contempt of God, I am contemned of men; for my swearing and forswearing, no man will beleeve me; for my gluttony I suffer hunger; for my drunkennes, thirst; for my adultery, vlcerous sores. Thus God hath cast me down that I might be humbled: and punished me, for example of others sinne: & though he suffers we in this world to perish without succour, yet trust I in the world to com to find mercy, by the merits of my Saviour, to whom I commend thee and commit my soule.

Thy repentant husband

for his disloyaltie,

ROBERT GREENE

Felicem fuisse, infaustum.

FINIS.

GREENES
Epitaph.

Diſcourſed Dialogue-wiſe between *Life* and *Death.*

LIFE.

STay grizly Thanatos, *pull back thy ſpleene,*
Triumpher over Tombes, what haſt thou done?
To blaſt the Muſes Lawrell, which was Greene,
Mine [illegible] *Apollo ſonne;*
O what i'ſt, made of mold, thy ſtab can ſhunne!
Sure th'haſt no eyes, to dart at random ſo,
To ſtrike the Cedar, *let the Muſhroome grow.*

Where life is lov'd, th'art too too quick to kill,
And to epitomize, with pangs, their joy:
Where Life *is loath'd, th'art ſlow and backward ſtill,*
And doſt adjourn their Death *with* Life's *annoy;*
Thus Tyrant-like, the beſt, dooſt ſtill deſtroy:
To ſom thou art a ſtern unbidden gueſt;
But who implore thy helpe thou helpeſt leaſt.

DEATH.

Greenes Epitaph.

DEATH.

Why would'ſt creepe longer on this duſty Round,
Where Wealth's *but* Want, *where Treaſure* won's *but loſt,*
Where all good hopes, in one ill hap, are drown'd
In ſome things, all; in all things, ſome are croſt,
And they've but little *that poſſeſſe the* moſt.
Unmixed joyes, to none on earth befall,
Who leaſt, ha's ſome; who moſt, ha's never all.

For what, muſt I his purer part *unſhrowd*
(A Kings command cannot withſtand my right)
And give his priſon'd Soule *midſt miſty Clowd*
A larger Horizon, t'emblaze her light;
Her Beauty *then appearing, Sun-like, bright*
Shall ſhunne the earth, to ſhine (fore Angels eyes)
In Bliſſe, *above the Star-beſpangled Skies.*

LIFE.

You ſacred Siſters, from whoſe Boſom's cropt,
A Freſher Flower, *than by* Alcinous *bred:*
Through your eyes Lymbeck let your loves be dropt
(Though often true that more oft hath been ſaid,
The fayrer Flower, the ſooner withered)
To keepe him Greene, *with world out-wearing Rimes,*
To th'admiration of ſucceeding Times.

He

Greenes Epitaph.

He, *whose gold-tipped Eare-attracting Tongue,*
With rare Cyllenian *Musick charmed so,*
As Marbles danc'd, when Theb's Musitian *sung.*
Let rowling Teares in plenti-tides oreflow,
For losse of England's *second* Cicero.
To make's not being, *be, as* he *hath beene,*
Greene, *never-wither'd, ever-wither'd* Greene.

I. H.